APPEAL TO WILSON FOR LABOR RELIEF

Corporations Engaged in War Work Losing Men to the Government.

A new phase of the complicated labor situation in the vicinity of New York City came to light yesterday in news that corporations engaged on vital war work, including the American Smelting and Refining Company and the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, had united in an appeal to the Government for assistance. The companies concerned employ approximately 30,000 men, in copper refineries, oil works and ship yards. It was learned that representatives of the concerns met in Perth Amboy, N. J., yesterday afternoon, and sclected a committee to lay before President Wilson certain facts going to show that the high wages being paid on construction undertakings for the Government had drawn men from private manufacturing to so serious a degree that production of essential materials for carrying on the war was threatened with a heavy reduction.

Officers of the companies with offices in this city were reluctant to discuss the matter last night in advance of action at Washington. The names of the men selected to handle the situation were not disclosed, but it was learned that the following companies have of late been particularly handicapped in filling Government orders because of the disruption of their forces: American Smelting and Refining Company, the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, the Standard Underground Cable Company; the United States Smelting Company, with a big refinery at Chrome, N. J.; the United Lead Company, which is a subsidiary of the National Lead Company; the Barler Asphalt Paving Company, engaged in making road material for the various cautonments; the Pardee Steel Works, the Chesebrough Manufacturing Company, the Perth Amboy Dry Dock Company, and the Roessier & Hesslacher Chemical Company.

Amboy Dry Dock Company, and Resister & Hesslacher Chemical Company:

The American Smelting and Refining Company employs approximately 2,000 men at its copper and lead refinery near Perth Amboy. Like the other copper concerns, this company has been bending every effort to keep the output of copper at a maximum level, and to do so has voted wage increases until at the present time 38 cents per hour for an eight-hour day is being paid, compared with the normal wage of about 23½ cents. Coming into competition with the demand for labor with the builders of shell-loading plants, hospitals, powder plants, &c., whose contract with the Government is on a "cost plus profit" basis, the copper men say they cannot hold their men. The current wage on the Government operation is 40½ cents per hour for a ten-hour day, with time and a half for overtime.

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overtime.

It was intimated yesterday in quarters familiar with the plans of the corporations whose representatives will go to Washington that the "cost plus" system will come in for adverse criticism before the Government officials.

The New Hork Times

Published: February 21, 1918 Copyright © The New York Times